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Histories of cultural populism

Martin Ryle

It is more than a decade since the perspectives of the Frankfurt School lost their dominance within left-wing cultural theory. In 1983 Fredric Jameson, while noting sardonically that poststructuralist celebrations of the consumer's 'desire' simply 'change the valences on the old descriptions of Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse', registered his own unease at the cultural elitism and revolutionary puritanism which lay within the Frankfurt tradition.¹ Studies were beginning to appear which offered a detailed account of popular cultural texts and domains – advertising, dress, women's magazines, romantic fiction – in terms of the meanings, and pleasures, which the users of that culture might find there; in the place of the passive and duped mass consumer, the figure was emerging of the cultural bricoleur or bricoleuse (Dick Hebdige's punks were adepts of 'Style as Bricolage'), raiding the polysemic repertoires of the popular in order to construct resistant and recalcitrant readings.²

Latent in this moment of revisionism, and increasingly apparent in certain more recent studies, is an impulse towards *cultural populism*. For Jim McGuigan, in his book of that title, the term is in the first place descriptive: it denotes the opening up of cultural analysis towards a broader range of texts and instances, a development that McGuigan welcomes.³ However, he also identifies some tendencies within the recent academic study of culture of which he is sharply critical: the identification of 'the dominant' in culture with 'high or bourgeois art' (which has 'become ... something of a straw man, for a new generation of intellectual populists to attack'), and the preference for a cool non-judgemental pose, which critics increasingly choose rather than engage with admittedly problematic but ineluctable questions of value. Against this, McGuigan insists that 'the study of culture is nothing if it is not about values'.⁴

McGuigan's remarks may prompt a more extensive critique of the aesthetic and political pretensions, or

evasions, of cultural populism. Such a critique is needed, not because populist approaches are universal or predominant, but because they are rarely explicitly opposed; to oppose them, after all, brings one face to face with those underlying questions about value, and about the authority of those who would pronounce on matters of value ('who has the *authority*', asks Jameson, 'and in the name of what', to dismiss others' pleasures as a 'commodity fix'?⁵). The present article focuses upon questions of 'pleasure' and of how this is coded and addressed in terms of a 'high/low' distinction which is both 'there' in social formations and also sustained within critical discourses. My approach is cultural-historical rather than primarily conceptual: I suggest ways in which current forms of cultural populism can be understood within both recent and longer-term patterns of critical approaches to the popular. Drawing on English literary and academic culture since Romanticism, I argue that encounters with popular culture have stood as important moments in the self-definition of intellectuals, and have carried implicit, and sometimes unacknowledged, personal and cultural meanings. These, I argue, persist even as 'popular culture' is endorsed rather than reprobated. What is offered as a new valuation of 'the popular' can also be understood as a new self-positioning of intellectuals: vis-à-vis the popular 'other' against which they find themselves placed within an economically and culturally divided society.

I want to open my argument by commenting on two pioneering feminist investigations of popular culture. These both note that the critic who studies the popular is likely also to be a consumer of that culture. Thus to reflect on what is called the popular is also to reflect on some of one's own pleasures.

For the writers concerned, that acknowledgement of pleasure does not necessarily or initially block the pursuit of critical analysis. In *Decoding Advertise-*

ments: *Ideology and Meaning in Advertising* (1978), Judith Williamson recognized the tension, but retained the distinction, between (false) pleasure and (true) knowledge:

As a teenager, reading both Karl Marx and 'Honey' magazine, I couldn't reconcile what I knew with what I felt. This is the root of ideology, I believe. I knew I was being 'exploited', but it was a fact that I was attracted. Feelings (ideology) lag behind knowledge (science). We can learn from their clash.⁶

Williamson's subsequent critical essays, collected in the volume *Consuming Passions* (1986), pursue the agenda set out here: to take account of the critic's own pleasurable investments in the texts and images she reviews, while retaining concepts and forms of analysis which problematize pleasure by seeing it precisely as intrinsic to the working of ideologies.

Janice Winship, in *Inside Women's Magazines* (1987), similarly registered the attraction of the material she discussed. Her critique, too, is dependent ultimately on concepts of ideology and of 'false needs'. She argues that new kinds of consumption, advertised and mirrored in the world of post-1953 women's magazines, may have '[provided] the impetus for a new form of the old ideology of femininity', but that this proved no more than a 'shoring up', lasting only until the 'stormy tide' of post-1968 feminism challenged both this revamped 'femininity' and the ideology of the feminine in general.⁷ More recent

women's magazines may reflect certain feminist ideas, and this may add to their pleasurable appeal for some readers; but they remain focused (Winship insists) on personal 'aspiration', in a highly individualized address which neglects or obscures the importance of social and economic conditions.⁸ Whether pre- or post-1968, these are discourses, and pleasures, that need to be questioned as part of any critique.

But Winship finds the critical impetus thwarted, or confused, by an awareness of how the subjective tension between pleasure and critique often gets mapped onto the way the critic writes about the pleasures of the mass audience. If most readers are seen as caught up in mere 'feelings', while the critic operates in the light of 'knowledge', then the critic seeks to claim a position of superiority which Winship finds untenable. The impulse to 'outlaw' the pleasures of reading *Cosmopolitan* 'manifests the worst aspects of a political "holier than thou" moralism',⁹ she decides. This moralism is as problematic for feminist as for Marxist political culture. Commenting on the reviewing of films and television in *Spare Rib*, Winship writes:

These reviews ... bolster the reviewer's position and raise feminism and feminists to the lofty pedestal of "having seen the light", with the consequent dismissal not only of a whole range of cultural events but also of many women's pleasurable and interested experiences of them. Whether intentionally or not feminists are setting themselves distinctly apart: 'us' who know and reject most popular cultural forms (including women's magazines); 'them' who remain in ignorance and continue to buy *Woman's Own* or watch *Dallas*. The irony, however, is that many of 'us' feel like 'them': closet readers and viewers of this fare.¹⁰

In this moment of tension, of potential impasse, Winship is making explicit what is implicit (as I shall argue) in some earlier writing: she is acknowledging that the construction of a high-low dichotomy functions as much to orchestrate a subjective relation to different kinds of pleasure, as to discriminate between 'us' and 'them'. She identifies the way in which a critical discourse which poses its critique in 'holier than thou' terms may be founded



on a certain hypocrisy. Clearly it is as well, once this is acknowledged, to avoid using a 'high-low' discourse that serves to displace onto a popular 'other' those forms of pleasure that are ideologically dubious. 'Popular' pleasures may well be pleasures that 'we' (cultural intellectuals) share.

It does not follow that there can be no critique of those pleasures. But for some commentators, abandoning the language of 'us' and 'them' does seem to entail, or at least to license, the abandonment of any critically evaluative orientation. I find such an abandonment, for instance, in Mica Nava's collection of essays *Changing Cultures: Feminism, Youth and Consumerism* (1992).¹¹ There are parallel emphases in other recent work – by Angela McRobbie, Rachel Bowlby and John Fiske, for example.¹² Acts of consumption are revalued as tendentially resistant or subversive, in a move that parallels the turn, in media studies, away from critical evaluations of popular texts and towards speculation on their variable, always potentially subversive readings by their audiences. Rejecting earlier left-wing discourses on consumption and mass culture, Nava disavows both the Marxist emphasis on the primacy of production and the 'left-humanist-realist' perspective from which socialist critiques of mass society have been launched.¹³ It was oversimple ('the cruder certainties of the immediate past') to see consumption and advertising in terms of 'mass man and woman as duped and passive recipients of conspiratorial messages': a recognition of 'the contradictory and fragmented nature of fantasy and desire', a 'new, more nuanced understanding of subjectivity', should now allow us to move beyond these post-1968 'socialist and feminist orthodoxies'.¹⁴ 'Consumerism' can offer sites of resistance, and its 'texts' – advertising – should no longer be 'marginalized' vis-à-vis those of high art; moreover, reading ads calls for and develops 'decoding skills' which may have subversive uses and potentials.¹⁵

This retrospective questioning of earlier terms of culture critique was registered and catalysed by the 'New Times' project, to which Nava refers.¹⁶ What emerges both from her argument and from a rereading today of certain of the contributions to the 'New Times' debate is the extent to which the discussion of popular or mass consumption has in effect functioned as a discourse about the writers' own needs, desires and relations to contemporary consumer society. Nava frankly notes that the new theoretical/political approaches to mass consumption 'have ... acted as a form of permission entitling members of today's left intelligentsia to enjoy consuming images and

commodities ... without having to feel anxious about whether these activities are good and correct';¹⁷ and McRobbie, though rather sceptical about 'subversive consumption', remarks that one aspect of the 'new politics of consumption' is that it has allowed 'the left and cultural intellectuals' to feel less guilty about pleasure.¹⁸

The problem with all this is not that the writers acknowledge the fraught relation between 'theory', personal pleasure and recent social history. On the contrary: the acknowledgement, as in Winship and Williamson, is valuable. But the consequence of avowing that dimensions of 'guilt' and 'permission' have been handled through a discourse about mass pleasures should not be a 'reversal of the valences', in which previously demonized cultural forms and modes of consumption are now unthinkingly celebrated. The questions here – of politics, culture and value – are questions about the future direction of the capitalist global economy and of how various cultural forms and texts may ease or impede, endorse or question, the imperative to consume. In my own view that imperative, central to our whole cultural and economic experience, is socially and ecologically damaging: as a cultural intellectual I would therefore want my writing to argue for a sceptical orientation towards the 'pleasures' of consumption *in general* – sceptical, even unfashionably 'puritanical'.¹⁹ However, my argument in the present context does not depend on convincing anyone that this 'puritanism' is justified. I claim only that if we are to discuss the cultural and social meaning of 'consumption', we need to address these questions in their own terms, and that they cannot be disposed of by the (accurate) observation that, in the past, cultural intellectuals have often been unduly disdainful of 'mass culture'.

Anxieties about the borders between the self and the masses have been at work in the writing of many cultural intellectuals, across the political spectrum. I wish now to offer a longer historical perspective by noting, and briefly discussing, some instances.

In the 1930s, questions about mass media and their audience became pressing not only for the philosophers of the Frankfurt School, but for many British writers, from Leavis to Woolf, Orwell or MacNeice.²⁰ Certainly the urgency with which the questions made themselves felt owed much to the use which totalitarian political formations, especially Nazism, were making of the new media. It owed

something also to the threat those media posed to the cultural prestige and precedence of literary intellectuals. Orwell, in work that anticipates 'cultural studies', pioneers the sympathetic discussion of popular texts, for instance in his accounts of boys' weekly comics and seaside postcards.²¹ However, he also reveals, in his inconsistencies and vacillations of tone and argument (especially in *The Road to Wigan Pier*), powerful ambivalences, which both draw him towards and repel him from his idea of 'working-class life'; and in his moments of repulsion he produces some notorious compelling negative images. The 'documentary' aspect of *Wigan Pier* is secondary to its role as an articulation of Orwell's powerfully ambivalent sense of his relation to 'the masses': a sense compounded of guilt, solidarity, insecurity about manliness, and an awareness of the growing marginality of both his class and its culture. The contradictions and tensions that Orwell expresses (and reveals), and that converge 'inside' him, are also visible, often in the form of options for one or another dichotomously opposed position, in his contemporaries' political and aesthetic relation to 'the masses'.²²

I shall refer again to the 1930s. However, the history I am tracing reaches back long before then. It takes in (for instance) the anxieties about mass-produced cultural artefacts and information media which are felt equally, despite their opposed political values, by Matthew Arnold and William Morris. It includes the moment of 'cultural primitivism' identified by Peter Burke, in which cultural intellectuals found ways of conceiving the national-popular community as organically constituted around 'authentic' folkways – often counterposed, in revivalist movements, to a decadent commercial culture ('the youthful mind which used to be kindled and purified by the poetry and legends of Ireland, runs serious risks of becoming debased, perhaps depraved, by battenning on literary garbage').²³

In Book VII of *The Prelude*, Wordsworth gives an extended account of 'Residence in London', where he lived for a number of short periods between 1791 and 1798.²⁴ Much of the Book is devoted to accounts of popular entertainment: renderings of a scene whose surface brilliance and allure are admitted. However, the terms of Wordsworth's concluding judgement on 'the mighty City', which follows a description of St Bartholomew's Fair, are strongly negative. The tumult of dazzling diversion leads ultimately, he says, to a state of 'blank confusion'. The 'swarm of [London's]

inhabitants', caught up in the flow of this 'undistinguishable world', are not enfranchised but enslaved by the pleasures it affords; they become

The slaves unrespite of low pursuits,
Living amid the same perpetual flow
Of trivial objects...²⁵

Wordsworth says that this 'unmanageable sight' would be disorienting to him, too, if it were not that, favoured by his rural upbringing which gave him the experience of 'early converse with the works of God', he is able to retain a more ordered and harmonious vision – a 'feeling of the whole'.²⁶

The spectacle of *pleasure* is taken to be especially eloquent in what it bespeaks. The fair, although a 'Parliament of Monsters' (l. 691), stands as 'a type not false/ Of what the mighty city is itself'. Subsequent writing may repeat the negative terms in which popular pleasure is evaluated, as when Day Lewis compares newsreel-watchers at the cinema to gaping fish nosing the glass wall of their tank, or when Auden offers to redeem the workers, through communism, from their deluded 'talkie-house' or canalside amusements, or it may adopt a more equivocal – even celebratory – tone, as in Tony Bennett's account of Blackpool Beach or John Fiske's celebration of video arcades as 'semiotic brothels'.²⁷ Either way, much concern about 'mass civilization' (as in Leavis²⁸), and much of the agenda of contemporary cultural and media studies, bespeaks an enduring conviction that the 'flow/ Of trivial objects' which makes up popular diversion is not at all a 'trivial' matter: rather, such diversion stands as 'a type not false' of important social and subjective tendencies. Why, we may ask, is popular pleasure made so significant a theme?

Alongside the judgemental distance which sets Wordsworth, and the reader, apart from the 'swarm' of Londoners, we may also detect kinship unacknowledged: the writer's separation of himself from and ultimate dismissal of 'low pursuits' may mask a troubling involvement in what is dismissed. Part of what Wordsworth sees in London is the spectacle of 'shameless' sexual display, including prostitution, visibly prominent at popular entertainments generally and theatres in particular: 'theatres, *which then were my delight*' (my italics: the later, 1850 text, as often, censors the frank admission of the 1805 version).²⁹ The poet, like Ulysses bound to the mast, looks on the spectacle, but is preserved apart. Recalling a scene which impressed itself with particular force on his memory, Wordsworth depicts a 'rosy babe', placed by a theatre attendant upon the board from which

refreshments were served. His mother is a prostitute, he is 'environed with a ring/ Of chance spectators, chiefly dissolute men/ And shameless women', and yet he sits amidst the moral danger of this company as unscathed as 'one of those who walked with hair unsinged/ Amid the fiery furnace':

He hath since
 Appeared to me oft times as if embalmed
 By Nature, through some special privilege
 Stopped at the growth he had; destined to live,
 To be, to have been, come and go, a child
 And nothing more, no partner in the years
 That bear us forward to distress and guilt,
 Pain and abasement...³⁰

We must feel, reading this, that the 'privilege' of immunity is also a curse: innocence is childish ignorance, and a kind of living death. The passage suggests the price that is paid for the distinction bought by refraining (or appearing to refrain) from 'low pursuits'. Certain kinds of pleasure, even perhaps the idea of pleasure as such, are associated intrinsically with the trivial and the popular. Therefore to distinguish oneself from the 'swarm', to see them as 'slaves', is to forgo that pleasure.

In so far as the cultural distinction between 'high' and 'low' has been read as or imbued with a distinction between the refined and the gross, the mental and the corporeal, then the gesture which dismisses the 'low' may always conceal this kind of acknowledgement that the writer's assumed or actual moral distance separates him from what he truly wants. (What *he* wants: the critical sensibility, up to the 1930s and beyond, is almost always male.) That contradictory dynamic is revealed in innumerable scenes: in Charles Gavan Duffy's characterization of French literature as 'impure and atheistical but sensational'; in the distaste of a later advocate of Irish traditions for the 'girls with painted lips and powdered faces' who, in urban dance-halls, 'indulge in negroid dances to the music – if it can be called music – of jazz'; in the seduction scene in *The Waste Land*, where the social placing of the protagonists ('typist', 'small house agent's clerk') licenses Eliot's voyeuristic

fantasy. Here, a certain eroticization of squalor as such ('On the divan are piled.../ Stockings, slippers, camisoles, and stays') makes particularly clear the link between cultural disdain and erotic attraction.³¹ And in some slightly later texts, this is more knowingly displayed. Louis MacNeice, whose *Autumn Journal* remains invaluable for its exploration of all this territory, captures a (masculine) longing at once subjective and cultural-political when he writes:

Let the old Muse loosen her stays
 Or give me a new Muse with stockings and
 suspenders
 And a smile like a cat.³²

Developments since then in cultural theory, and cultural histories written in their light, have helped to deepen our understanding of the meanings that can be brought to and organized around the boundaries between the 'high' and the 'low'/'popular'. Work influenced by Bakhtin, such as Peter Stallybrass and Allon White's study of *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, has illuminated the nineteenth-century inflections of this secular European mode of thinking.³³ Feminist scholarship and critique enforce an awareness of how the feminization of the 'low' – a base parallel to the feminization of the ethereal 'Muse' – underlies both the disdain and the fascination with which popular forms and entertainments have been construed by male writers. (McRobbie, observing that



Walter Benjamin offers a more 'constructive' orientation than does Adorno towards 'the study of mass culture and popular culture', notes also the importance in his work and life, as in Baudelaire's, of encounters with prostitutes; in this regard, she remarks, Baudelaire and Benjamin were not so different from the conventional bourgeois men of their time.³⁴)

The issues at stake are not simple. We are dealing both with the fact that certain kinds of 'shameless' – that is, commodified – sexual display have indeed been more available within disreputable culture, and with a cultural feminization of whatever is construed as 'low' ('degraded consumption is assigned to women': Jameson³⁵). Feminization and the idea of 'shameless' display are in part masculinist metaphors for a general sense that the 'popular' is *easy*: its charm, and its limitation, is that it makes no rigorous demands on the faculties of reason and judgement. Such psychic oppositions brought to the categorization of culture affect both how the 'popular' is apprehended, and what is relegated to the 'popular'.

However, I shall draw one relatively simple conclusion: that the valuation of 'popular culture' is unstable because the term, apart from its empirical reference, expresses an ambivalent *relationship*. To deploy it, standing (as those who deploy it must) outside 'the popular', has often been to denote a pleasure explicitly reprobated, but covertly desired. This makes it easier to understand why the new discourses of the 'popular', reversing an earlier puritanism, may have as their real text new and more relaxed feelings about pleasure, guilt and consumption.

Of course, the maintenance (or abrogation) of the distinction between 'high' and 'low'/'popular' culture also articulates a relation of cultural *authority* – both effective authority and claimed or desired authority – and this too has been unstable and subject to change. There is not space here for a full discussion of this history. I would simply note that the 'authority' of cultural intellectuals within bourgeois culture has never been secure, in terms of their relation to the economic and cultural dominance of the class of which they have most often been a semi-dissident fraction – one thinks of the anathema which Arnold, often taken to represent Victorian cultural authoritarianism, pronounced upon the Victorian bourgeoisie. Moreover, that authority has been subject to new kinds of challenge in the last fifty years, as established literary and academic circuits and media have been complemented and then increasingly marginalized by powerful new forms and modes of communication: film, broadcasting, advertising, popular music. During

this same period, cultural intellectuals have themselves been recruited from less homogeneous and more diverse social origins, in terms of class, gender, and (lately, and to a very limited extent) 'race'. These challenges and diversifications have led to reassertions of traditional kinds of authority (as in Leavis, himself an 'outsider' to the then prevalent assumptions and etiquettes of 'Cambridge English'), and to complex renegotiations (as in the work of Raymond Williams, or of Paul Gilroy in *The Black Atlantic*), as well as to options for a more or less wholesale cultural populism – in which, it may be suggested, the discontents of a vulnerable cultural 'authority' are managed by a disavowal of any claim to judgement and by an inversion of Arnoldian valuations.

The problem – to reiterate my central argument – is that this kind of reversal offers no basis on which to engage with the important questions: of the aesthetic, political and ethical qualities and value of texts and cultural forms; of the social and ecological impact of particular kinds of consumption or of consumerism in general; and of the general relations between cultural work, political discourses and economic power. Perhaps we can now agree that nothing, beyond the force of the arguments that they produce, gives cultural critics 'authority' to pronounce on these questions. But it is not clear what their function is if they are not prepared to discuss them.

Notes

1. Fredric Jameson, 'Pleasure: A Political Issue', in F. Jameson and others, *Formations of Pleasure*, London, 1983, pp. 2f.
2. See Dick Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, London, 1993 (1979), especially pp. 103f.; and also, for instance, Tania Modleski, *Loving with a Vengeance*, New York, 1984.
3. Jim McGuigan, *Cultural Populism*, London, 1992.
4. McGuigan, p. 173. See also pp. 71ff., 75, 80, 82.
5. Jameson, 'Pleasure: A Political Issue', p. 3.
6. Judith Williamson, *Decoding Advertisements: Ideology and Meaning in Advertising*, London, 1993 (1978), p. 9.
7. Janice Winship, *Inside Women's Magazines*, London, 1987, p. 35. As Mica Nava has pointed out, this line of critique bears similarities not just with the Marxist analysis of Marcuse's *One Dimensional Man* (1964), but with the liberal concern about the manipulative and exploitative effects of advertising and consumerism expressed in Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders* (1957) and in Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1965); see Mica Nava, *Changing Cultures: Feminism, Youth and Consumerism*, London, 1992, pp. 162f.
8. Winship, pp. 64, 80f., 120.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 140.
11. McGuigan makes some critical observations on Nava's book, some of which parallel some of mine.
12. Angela McRobbie, *Postmodernism and Popular Culture*, London, 1994; Rachel Bowlby, *Shopping with*

- Freud, London, 1993; John Fiske, *Reading the Popular*, London, 1989 (especially Chapter 2, 'Shopping for Pleasure').
13. Nava, *Changing Cultures*, pp. 167f., 178. See especially the last three chapters: 'Consumerism and its Contradictions', 'Discriminating or Duped? Young People as Consumers of Advertising/Art' (written with Orson Nava), and 'Consumerism Reconsidered: Buying and Power'. McGuigan offers some detailed criticism, particularly of the second of these essays, in *Cultural Populism*.
 14. Nava, pp. 163–7.
 15. *Ibid.*, pp. 167f., 174ff.
 16. See Stuart Hall and Martin Jacques, eds, *New Times: The Changing Face of Politics in the 1990s*, London, 1989. Nava refers particularly to Frank Mort's iconoclastic essay on 'The Politics of Consumption' (pp. 160ff.). See also especially John Urry's chapter, 'The End of Organised Capitalism'. Michael Rustin's contribution, 'The Trouble with New Times' (pp. 303–20), is a forceful socialist rebuttal of many of the 'New Times' tenets.
 17. Nava, p. 167.
 18. McRobbie, p. 40. McRobbie offers a more tentative and (in my view) more scrupulous review of many of the issues Nava raises.
 19. The best discussion of these questions is in Kate Soper, *Troubled Pleasures*, London, 1990. Nava acknowledges their importance, though in my view her comments on them are rather superficial, not least when she notes approvingly that rock musicians who endorse Green causes may make them more fashionable and so redeem them from their association with 'sandals and renunciation' (Nava, p. 198).
 20. See Valentine Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, Oxford, 1988, for an exhaustive placing of 1930s' intellectuals and writers in their cultural and intertextual setting. See also J. Clark and others, *Culture and Crisis in Britain in the Thirties*, London, 1984; and F. Gloversmith, ed., *Class, Culture and Social Change: A New View of the 1930s*, London, 1980.
 21. 'Boys' Weeklies' is in Volume 1, pp. 505ff., and 'The Art of Donald McGill' in Volume 2, pp. 183ff., of Orwell's *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters*, London, 1970.
 22. See especially Cunningham, chapters 7–11.
 23. Charles Gavan Duffy, 'The Revival of Irish Literature', in C.G. Duffy and others, *The Revival of Irish Literature*, 1893, reprinted New York, 1973, p. 12. See Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, London, 1978 (especially Chapter 1).
 24. References are to the parallel text edition of *The Prelude*, edited by J.C. Maxwell, Harmondsworth (revised edn, 1988). Incidental information is drawn from Maxwell's editorial material, and quotations are from the 1805 text; as the latter are all from Book VII, I give line numbers only.
 25. *Prelude*, ll. 695f.
 26. *Ibid.*, ll. 708–40.
 27. See W.H. Auden, 'A Communist to Others', subsequently disowned by Auden, but reprinted in R. Skelton, ed., *Poetry of the Thirties*, Harmondsworth, 1964, p. 54, and C. Day Lewis, 'Newsreel', in Skelton, p. 69; Tony Bennett, 'A Thousand and One Troubles: Blackpool Pleasure Beach', in Jameson and others, *Formations of Pleasure*, pp. 138f.; John Fiske, *Reading the Popular*, Boston MA and London, 1989, p. 93.
 28. F.R. Leavis, *Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture*, London, 1930.
 29. *Prelude*, ll. 435f.; the passage as a whole is at lines 320–440.
 30. *Ibid.*, ll. 382–405.
 31. Duffy, p. 49; T.H. Mason, *The Islands of Ireland*, London, 1950 (third edn), p. 75; *The Waste Land*, ll. 215–256.
 32. Louis MacNeice, *Collected Poems*, London, 1979, p. 129.
 33. Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, London, 1986.
 34. McRobbie, pp. 102–4 – drawing, as she acknowledges, on Susan Buck-Morss's edition/compilation, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project*, Cambridge MA, 1989. Nava (p. 191) makes a related point when she comments that the debate on pornography has 'very definite echoes' of the wider debate on hedonism, pleasure and consumption.
 35. In Jameson, 'Pleasure: A Political Issue', p. 4.
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